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# H I S T O R I C Fort Greene Association N E W S L E T T E R

NOVEMBER, 2005

## It Takes a Village

The stray dog was around for weeks. Skinny, malnourished and with one ear split from an earlier wound, he resembled Vincent Van Gogh - with a tail. Scooped up by a dog-loving couple, he spent 3 days getting IV's at the Vet Hospital. Unfortunately, their current dog was not willing to share territory. So a plea went out for somebody to take this loveable, but sad, 4-year-old pup. A couple who saw photos, melted. So the love-starved dog had a new home. And then it began: the flood of help. The clerk at the pet store offered to close the store mid-day and deliver the new crate and cans of food herself. Neighbors begged to be dog-walkers. Others said "forget a kennel on vacation; we'll take care of him". The people at Pillow Café routinely bring out espressos for the dog's owner because, for whatever reasons in his storied history, this dog flips out if he is tied up - even for a second. And EVERYONE says hi to the dog, pets him and asks him how's he doing without bothering to even make eye-contact with his new masters! That's a lot of people pitching in to make something good happen. Admittedly this is a little bit of a stretch, but that is what is happening everyday here in Fort Greene. People working together on issues big and small, to make life better. So whether it's FGA volunteers planting bulbs to beautify Public School 20 on Adelphi Street, or neighborhood groups working together to make R6B Re-Zoning a reality or each and every one of us browsing and shopping our Fort Greene merchants BEFORE heading to any chain stores - it is about all of us pulling together to make good things happen right here in Fort Greene, Brooklyn.

Phillip Kellogg  
FGA Chair

## Not a Slam-Dunk

The battle for the future of Fort Greene began in earnest this September when the MTA awarded the development of the Atlantic Yards to Bruce Ratner's FCRC. Planned for the site is monstrous walled city designed by west coast architect Frank Gehry. With the announcement of the ESDC as the lead agency the project has been outlined to contain a 19,000 seat arena, 7,300 units of housing, 900,000 square feet of office and retail space, a 180 room hotel, 7 acres of open space and parking for 4,000 cars. A scope for the EIS on this project was issued and responses were presented to the ESDC at the 6 hour hearing on October 18<sup>th</sup> and in writing. Following is the conclusion from the FGA response.

*The FGA can find no advantage to the Fort Greene community as the FCR project plan has been described. Fort Greene has transformed itself over the last 30 years into a vibrant, desirable, prosperous community while still maintaining a healthy diversity and close knit neighborhood environment. The FGA be-*

*lieves that much of the advancement Fort Greene residents have achieved through their own efforts will be undermined, diminished and destroyed should the FCR project go forward. We anticipate that there will be serious health consequences particularly manifested in increased asthma rates as well as stress induced illness caused by at least 15 years of non-stop construction, terrible traffic and parking problems and an overburdened public transportation system. We can not support any aspect of the FCR project design. We look forward to working with the City government on a development project over the Atlantic Yards that conforms to the principles outlined in the Community Guidelines as articulated by the Council of Brooklyn Neighborhoods and executed by the Extell Corporation in their proposal submitted in response to the MTA's RFP.*

The FGA in support of Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn has created a team for the fundraising Walkathon being held on November 13, 2005. The FGA asks that you contribute what you can to help defray the legal cost as the FGA and ddb continue the battle to insure to future of Fort Greene.

Visit [www.HistoricFortGreene.org](http://www.HistoricFortGreene.org) for walkathon details.

## Waterfront Greenway

By Milton Puryear, Brooklyn Greenway Initiative

If you have ever thought Brooklyn's decaying waterfront could be put to better use, we've got good news. A plan to create a 14-mile long greenway from Greenpoint to Sunset Park leaped forward this summer when Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez secured \$14.6 million for implementing the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway. Conceived and planned by Brooklyn Greenway Initiative [BGI], the greenway is now moving from the planning stage into design and implementation along the northern border of Fort Greene.

When the greenway is complete you will be able to walk, jog or cycle along the waterfront in a green environment, separated from traffic. You can get your exercise or relaxation walking up to Greenpoint or riding out to Bay Ridge and beyond to Jamaica Bay.

Over the next two to five years, significant segments of the greenway are expected to be built. That includes segments around the Navy Yard, Brooklyn Bridge Park and the Red Hook container and cruise ship terminals. The greenway plan calls for it to be built in segments, dots and dashes that will become increasingly connected over time.

Planning for the middle seven miles from the Brooklyn Navy Yard to the Gowanus Canal has been completed under a contract from the New York State Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. The plan calls for curb extensions and fence setbacks around the Brooklyn Navy Yard to create space for the greenway. The standard is a 30-foot wide right of way to provide adequate space for separate bike and pedestrian paths and for trees and other landscape elements.

As an example, on the Kent Avenue edge of the Navy Yard, NYC DOT is expected to extend curbs 6 feet and BGI has requested that the Navy Yard allow its fences to be set back 8 feet. Negotiations like these are making it possible to carve space for the greenway out of the urban grid. BGI and its partners are negotiating with six public agencies and over a dozen private property owners to assemble the 14-mile right of way.

The greenway project is a collaborative planning effort. BGI has partnered with the Regional Plan Association to complete and implement the plan in Community Boards 2 & 6 while other partnerships have been established in Sunset Park, Greenpoint and Williamsburg. The common thread across the entire project is BGI whose mission is that the Greenway gets done. "We will work with anyone who shares that vision, in whatever capacity makes the most sense," said Brian McCormick who initiated the project with Puryear in 1998. "Our ability to get it implemented depends on the support of area residents," he adds. You can learn how to help by registering as a supporter at [www.brooklyngreenway.org](http://www.brooklyngreenway.org), or by calling 718.522.0193.

## Fort Greene Holiday Shopping!

Get a jump on the holiday season at the FGA's next general meeting November 21, 2005 at 7:30 pm Lafayette Presbyterian Church. Meet the merchants who can meet your needs. 14 merchants representing a wide variety of products will set up shop, show their wares, and describe their services.

Sample wine, food, gifts, apparel, decorations, house wares and jewelry gift ideas galore, surprises, free samples, gift certificates and door prizes. Speakers from FAB, MARP and other merchant groups will update us on retail and commercial development, the effect of parking meters on Fulton Avenue and how we can help establish a stronger shopping district.

## Compost This!

Bring your fruit and veggie scraps to the Farmer's Market at Fort Greene Park every Saturday and help reduce waste. Instead of all those trimmings going into the garbage, they will be recycled into rich soil - known to gardeners as "black gold". At home this is easy. Keep a dedicated Tupperware set aside. Whenever you trim a squash or core an apple put the trimmings in the container. If you have room in the fridge, keep the container in there. If not, a cool space will do. When Saturday mornings come around, bring the goods to the market and dump them in the clearly marked bin at the park entrance. Fruit and vegetable peelings, coffee grounds, even post-Halloween pumpkins. Animal products are not accepted. Next spring the scraps of today will nourish the vegetables of the season.

## IT'S THE SEASON OF GIVING

### YOUR TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS KEEP THE FGA STRONG

I am pleased to enclose my membership dues to the Fort Greene Association, Inc.

\_\_ \$15 Member \_\_ \$25 Friend \_\_ \$50 Patron \_\_ \$100 Corporate \_\_ \$150 Corporate+ \_\_ \$200 Angel

Please Print

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Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Checks to Fort Greene Association, Inc., Box 170563, Brooklyn, NY 11217-0563

The Fort Greene Association, Inc., operates as a non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. A copy of our latest financial report may be obtained by contacting the Office of the Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.

## Shoes: Questions for an inventory of souls

Mary Kennan Herbert

Awaiting trash pickup, perched on a bag of garbage next to the curb, a pair of men's dress shoes, polished, new rubber soles and heels. Is the wearer now in Heaven? Are you a size 11? Maybe you should adopt these, if your soul needs healing, or you've got the shoeless blues. A young child's sneaker, bright pink, yellow laces, lies on the rain-stained sidewalk at dawn. Half a block away, its partner sprawls upside down in the gutter among fallen leaves. Maybe an angry child flung away its shackles? A parent grieves, a toddler balks, life goes on. In a trash receptacle at a busy intersection, a woman's racy sandal sits forlornly on leftovers, atop yesterday's newspaper and remains of lunch. Why just one sandal? Where is its partner? Saved, or thrown down a grate? Did some gorgeous babe hobble on one foot home to her lover? A stoop sale today includes chipped china and an old pair of golf shoes sitting expectantly on brownstone stairs, waiting for one more trek around the course, a hole in one, a last afternoon on the putting green. Cocktails at the clubhouse, a trophy, that jacket—the one that got away? Basketball shoes, a row of them, unclaimed in the locker room. Like horses in a racing stable, no longer able to run, they will be discarded. Have you ever held a shoe to your ear, like a shell? Hear sounds of cheering crowds, glory like ocean surf, surging and dying, yes, predictable. A solo Mary Jane in the corner of the closet, a grass-stained espadrille, a rain boot with no mate. Abandoned, did each pair then split up to navigate past the angry shoals of life alone? Ah, shoes, what fables they tell of fey days of youth, endless summer days, nights. How they pontificate!



Mary Kennan Herbert, originally from St. Louis, Missouri, has lived in Brooklyn's Fort Greene neighborhood for over 16 years, long enough to call herself a Brooklynite. She teaches literature and writing courses at Long Island University in Brooklyn, and has also taught at St. Joseph College, St. Francis College, and City Tech in Brooklyn, as well as at other colleges and universities in the New York City area. Her poems have appeared in many literary journals around the world. Six collections of her poetry have been published by Ginninderra Press in Australia, and one volume by Meadow Geese Press in the USA. -Illustration by Audrey Kennan

### OUR ANNUAL EVENT...

The FGA will be sponsoring its annual holiday party on December 2, 2005, 8pm at the lovely home of Amy Bennett and Jason Reichellon 175 Lafayette Avenue. Be sure to circle the date on your calendar. We're looking forward to seeing you, and bring your favorite dish.

## HISTORIC Fort Greene Association

Box 170563, Brooklyn, NY 11217-0563

On the November 21 Agenda:

### MEET THE MERCHANTS

14 merchants will set up shop,  
show their wares, and describe  
their services

Thank you for your membership.

## NEXT FGA MEETING November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2005

7:30PM- Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, 85 South Oxford Street, Fort Greene, Brooklyn

## GOINGS ON

### MEETINGS

**Fort Greene Association** - Meets Mondays at 7:30 pm, Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, 85 South Oxford Street, Fort Greene.

November 21, February 27, March 20, April 17, May 22. Participate in our OPEN FORUM.

**Community Board 2** - Meets 2nd Wednesday of the month, 6 pm. Call CB2 office, 718.596.5410, for location. Attend.

**88th Precinct** - 3rd Tuesday of each month, 7:30. Call 718.636.6511 ext 526x for location.

**Brooklyn Artists Breakfast** - 3rd Wednesday of the month, 9am, BODEGAS restaurant, 868 Fulton Street at Clinton Ave (open for breakfast at 8am). Questions: 718.624.5719.

### NEW SCENES

**Wallabout Mgmt. Realty Corp.** - 70 Lafayette Avenue, near South Elliott 718.330.0410. The Manager is Charles Alston and you may recognize his name and that of Wallabout who were for many years on Myrtle Avenue. So, we welcome a new/old business to this part of the neighborhood.

**"Pamper Me" Bath Shop** - 7 Greene Avenue, just off Fulton Street, 917.771.4487, Tues-Sat 12 noon to 8pm, Sunday noon to 4pm. Owner Theresa Johnson-Douglas. Fresh & Natural Handcrafted Soaps and Many More Lovely Products. Say hello - the fragrances will make you want to linger.

**Whisper** - 63 Lafayette Avenue, 2nd Floor, 646.260.1921. Owners Tia Kane and Stephon Torrence. Vintage apparel and accessories, including a men's' corner. Sophisticated with a bit of the funky. Stop by - you'll enjoy.

**Keur N Deye Restaurant** - back in business 737 Fulton Street between South Portland & South Elliot



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718.797.WINE

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The Greene Grape is proud to underwrite  
this issue of the Fort Greene Association  
newsletter.



Have you decided what to fill  
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Six all American wines made  
with integrity, skill  
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